

West Hartford Substance Abuse Prevention Commission (SAPC)
Meeting Minutes
April 10, 2014

Attendees: Amal Ali, Jeff Bersin, Sarah Chaves, Rob Gross, Ryan Morgan, Helen Drohan, Jamahl Hines, Joe Kalache, Renee Kleinman, Brooks Loomis, Zulynette Morales, Jean Schensul, Steve Schensul, Pat Tyler, Mark Zydanowicz

Welcome from Chairperson / Introductions / Approve Minutes / Early Departures

Introductions were made. The March minutes were approved. Jean Schensul announced that ICR will be hiring 3 teens over the summer to work on the *Lead by Example* campaign. There are currently a large number of teens working on the campaign at Hall and Conard High Schools.

Strategic Planning – Part 2

Steve Schensul did an overview of the last strategic planning session in which the household was described as a primary focus in relation to marijuana, prescription drugs, tobacco, and alcohol. There was discussion of “The Household as Drug Dealer” in terms of young people being able to obtain these items in their own homes through open liquor cabinets, prescription medications of family members, etc. Two factors were discussed: adolescents who will use these items and parents who need to prevent access.

The issue was looked at from an institutional level and a general population level:

Institutional:

- Over-prescription / supply of prescription drugs
- Removing the stigma/judgment of drug addiction (SAPC could overlap this with Hartford Hospital’s initiatives in this area)

General Population:

- Increase knowledge on the role of the household
- How to talk to your kids about these substances
- Address denial

Resources:

- Hartford Hospital
- Governor’s Prevention Partnership
- Lead by Example Campaign
- Faith-based Communities
- Wheeler Clinic Prevention & Wellness
- Institute for Community Research
- CCAR
- The Bridge Family Center

Population Groups:

- Community of Concern
- PTO (low attendance concerns)
- Drama Boosters, etc.

Jean Schensul shared that these substances are widely used and available and some just get caught up in it; the issue needs to be addressed openly; most young people use more than one substance.

Renee Kleinman expressed concern about the limited resources in the schools to offer the interventions mentioned. Steve Schensul responded that this would be a parent focused initiative. He posed the slogan/question: PARENTS: ARE YOU DEALING DRUGS TO YOUR KIDS IN YOUR HOME? Ryan Morgan shared that young people could present material to parents.

Jean Schensul shared that ICR created a draft parent survey for middle and high school parents and offered an overview. The draft survey will be sent to SAPC members for feedback. Jean recommended reaching out to faith-based communities to distribute the messages. Jeff Bersin shared that there is an interdenominational group that exists and meets. Ryan Morgan suggested that the SAPC could share their message at annual church events. Jean Schensul offered that Community of Concern parents could speak at churches. Brooks Loomis reported that Fleet Feet has a running group that does a 15-minute presentation before running sessions where the message could be shared. Rob Gross recommended sharing the message 10 minutes before football or basketball games.

Steve Schensul suggested that the following questions be considered: If there is a risk, why should I worry about it as a parent? What do I do about it? Steve offered that this initiative requires a multi-level, multi-faceted approach and that a small group might need to work out some details prior to the next SAPC meeting.

Sarah Chaves proposed the slogan: "Is Your House a Safe House?" She then proposed going through bullets with parents outlining what makes a safe house; offering strategies; and giving resources i.e. support groups, Community of Concern, etc. In addition, there could be a quiz for parents to complete related to the safety of their household.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Pat Tyler

April 16, 2014

